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ABSTRACT

Providing a program for teaching assertive behavior and social skills to adolescents, this manual contains specific instructions, activities, worksheets, and homework assignments. (Assertive behavior is typically distinguished from both passive behavior and aggressive behavior and is believed to be a component of effective social and psychological functioning.) The activities and procedures offered are organized into materials for 12 sessions and are presented in a manner intended to facilitate their use by teachers, counselors, social workers, or psychologists working with groups of children. Although designed for adolescents, the activities may be modified for younger children. Procedures have been field-tested in various settings and have been shown to enhance children's assertive skills, self-descriptions, and sense of responsibility. Experience in conducting the assertiveness program indicates that 45-minute sessions held twice a week are appropriate. It is important to note that teachers or counselors who know little about assertion training principles should obtain training before attempting to implement these procedures and, of equal importance, obtain the services of a consultant who will act as a resource person while the course is conducted. A set of 40 additional assertion training activities, based on situations involving requests and refusals, is appended. (RH)

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A MANUAL

FOR

TEACHING ASSERTIVE BEHAVIORS TO

CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS

PS013256

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Preface

This manual describes procedures and activities designed to teach children and adolescents more assertive behavior patterns. Assertive behavior is typically distinguished from both passive or aggressive behavior and is believed to be important for effective social and psychological functioning.[1,2] The activities are presented in a manner to facilitate their implementation by teachers, counselors, social workers or psychologists working with groups of children.

These procedures have been field-tested in applied settings and demonstrated to enhance children's assertive skills, self-descriptions and sense of responsibility.[3,4,5,6,7] The specific activities included in this manual were designed for adolescent students, but certainly may be modified for other age children. Previous experience indicates that 45-minute sessions twice a week seem to be appropriate. Teachers or counselors who are not knowledgeable of assertion training principles should obtain some training prior to attempting to implement these procedures and obtain some consultation while conducting this program.

The authors wish to thank Dr. Mary Rotheram for providing the activities in Appendix A as well as a great deal of other material helpful for the design of this manual.

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Session #1

Goal: To discriminate assertive responses from passive and aggressive responses.

Objectives: Participants will be able to distinguish passive, aggressive and assertive responses.

Procedures:

1. Ask students to take notes as you describe these concepts.
Draw the following three pictures on the blackboard and explain the basic differences among passive, aggressive and assertive responses.

Shy puppy dog

A)

King Kong

B)

Cool cat

C)

Passive behavior is often called "being shy" or "quiet." However, passive people are really those who deny themselves the right to make choices for themselves, fail to express their feeling and thoughts or fail to obtain the benefits of a particular situation. Passive people seldom reach their desired goals and often feel hurt or anxious as a result of their inadequate behavior. In short, passive people allow others to infringe upon their rights.

Aggressive behavior is mean or angry behavior. Aggressive people reach their goals and enhance their self-worth by hurting others. Whereas passive people allow others to infringe upon their rights, aggressive people often make choices for others and infringe upon the rights of others.

Assertive behavior is asking for what you want and declining what you don't want in a polite, calm way. Assertive people strive to reach their goals without hurting others. Assertive people express their feelings and thoughts, make choices for themselves and feel good about their self-concepts.

Activities

A) Divide the participants into small groups and assign each group a sample situation from Appendix A. Then have the groups collectively write down three different ways to respond to the situation using a passive response, an aggressive response and an assertive response.

B) Have participants role-play or act out the three different types of responses. Do not require all participants to role-play, but enthusiastically reinforce those who volunteer and prompt (ask) those who are hesitant.

Session #1 - cont.

Continue the role-plays until all the participants can distinguish between passive, aggressive and assertive responses.

Note: When correcting a role-play, always try to reinforce or praise some aspect before correcting other aspects.

2. Explain the concepts of "voice loudness" and "eye-contact" to participants and remind them to utilize these skills in their role-plays.

Loudness: Too low a voice volume is perceived as passive and too high a voice volume is seen as aggressive. The participants should speak loud enough for others to hear and to be taken seriously. However, if they speak too loud, people will "turn them off," refuse to play with them or punish them. You may want to use an audio or tape recorder to demonstrate high, low and moderate or firm voice levels.

Eye Contact: Participants should be taught how to look other people "in the eye" when speaking to them. Passive people tend not to look people in the eye and aggressive people tend to scare others by staring too long. Assertive people look directly into others' eyes when requesting or refusing things. Participants who find this difficult may need to practice looking at noses or ears at first, and then quickly looking into eyes.

Note: When correcting, model first. Then have participants practice entire sequence again. Then praise.

Activities

A) Have participants role-play their responses to the sample situations in front of the entire group. Discuss the differences between passive, aggressive and assertive behaviors and prompt participants to praise each other (i.e., which skills did Susan role-play correctly?).

3. Explain the concepts of assertive "refusals" and "requests" to participants and remind them to practice these behaviors.

Refusals: Assertive refusing involves the person saying "no" when s/he wants to and feeling good about it. It is not necessary to make up creative or elaborate excuses for refusing. A polite, but firm "no" will do. Passive people have difficulty saying no and often get taken advantage of. They often make up excuses rather than say what they believe. Assertive people say, "No, thank you", and perhaps give a reason or two, without lying or doing what they really do not wish to do.

Requests: Assertive requests involve the person asking for what s/he wants and feeling good about it. It is not likely that a person will always get what s/he asks for, as others may refuse the request. However, if you do make your request, others will at least know what you want and may agree. Passive people are often frightened to make requests, and aggressive people make demands rather

Session #1 - cont.

than requests. Assertive people ask for what they want and often get it. When assertive people do not get their requests granted, they often tell themselves, "I'm glad I asked, anyway," or, "At least I know the answer."

If time, ask students to think about how they acted when asked to do a role-play. Were they passive, aggressive or assertive? Ask how they usually behave in those situations.

Note: It is important to tell participants from the first session that you are not telling them how to behave. You are only presenting different kinds of behavior for them to observe and practice. Most people need practice in assertive behavior and that will be the focus of these sessions. Participants must make their own decisions about their behavior, however, this program should provide them with more choices from which to choose.

Worksheet # 1

GIVE THE CORRECT WORD AND DEFINITION:

_____ person

_____ person

_____ person

What are 2 things to think about when giving an assertive response?

_____

_____

A friend of yours asks to copy your homework and you don't want to let him/her do that. What do you do?

Name _____

Session #2

Goal: To review passive, aggressive and assertive terms, "eye contact," "voice volume," "requests and refusals." To understand how to use "goal statements."

Objectives: Participants will be able to make clear goal statements.

Procedures:

1) Review concepts from Session #1

2) Pass out Worksheet #1 and instruct participants to complete it. After everyone has completed the worksheet, go over the answers and correct any errors.

3) Explain "goal clarity" and review examples. Goal Clarity: For others to grant your requests, it is necessary for them to clearly understand just what you want. "Goal clarity" involves people stating their desires in short, specific statements. A clear goal is expressed in one sentence.

Examples:

A) General request to parent - "I want you to treat me better."

B) Specific request to parent - "I want $5 per week for an allowance." --- "I want you to look at me and listen to me when I speak to you."

C) General request to peer - "I want you to stop bothering me."

D) Specific request to peer - "I want you to stop calling me names." --- "I want you to stop poking me."

Note: It is important to make clear that nobody is always passive, aggressive or assertive. Rather, each of us is like this at times or in certain situations. By becoming more aware of our behavior and by practicing alternative behaviors, we may change our behavior if we choose.

4) Pass out Worksheet #2 and instruct participants to complete it.

5) Ask participants to "pair off" and share their "goal statements" with their partners. Review answers with entire group.

WORKSHEET # 2

WRITE YOUR STATEMENTS IN COMPLETE SENTENCES.

WHAT I WANT (REQUESTS)	WHAT I DON'T WANT (REFUSALS)
PARENTS-	PARENTS-
TEACHERS-	TEACHERS-
FRIENDS-	FRIENDS-
SELF-	SELF-

NAME_____

Examples of Requests and Refusals

Requests

1) To friends:

   a) I want to go ice skating Friday.
   b) I want you to come to school earlier.
   c) I just want you to care more.

2) To teachers:

   a) I would like a break during the period.
   b) I want to stay inside when it's cold.
   c) I want you to listen to me more.
   d) I would like five minutes a day to goof off.

3) To parents:

   a) I want you to trust me to be outside after it gets dark.
   b) I want $5.00 allowance each week.
   c) I want to stay up later another half-hour.

4) To self:

   a) I want to save my money.
   b) I want to make more friends.
   c) I want to lose 10 pounds.

Refusals:

1) To friends:

   a) I don't want you to bug me today.
   b) I don't want you to act as if you don't care about me.
   c) I don't want to meet you Friday nights.

2) To teachers:

   a) I don't want to do spelling now.
   b) I don't want you to scold me in front of my friends.
   c) I don't want to work so fast.

3) To parents:

   a) I don't want to do the dishes tonight.
   b) I don't want to "baby-sit" my brother/sister this weekend.
   c) I don't want to be grounded for one "C" grade.

4) To self:

   a) I don't want a messy room.
   b) I don't want to curse so much.
   c) I don't want to cut school.

Session #3

Goal: To review "goal clarity," explain the "feeling thermometer" and "assertive posture" and "assertive affect".

Objective: Participants will be able to use the "feeling thermometer" and speak using assertive posture and affect.

Procedures:

1) Review goal statements from last session.

2) Explain the "feeling thermometer" as a gauge for people to measure how anxious certain situations make them feel. Once anxiety producing situations are identified, attempts can be made to desensitize oneself to those situations. Situations which do not cause any anxiety or anger would be rated"0". A zero rating would indicate a situation in which you feel perfectly calm. On the other hand, a rating of 100 represents a situation which makes you extremely anxious, angry or scared. A fun activity with your friends might be rated "0" and an argument with your parents or teacher rated "100".

3) Give out Worksheet #3 and ask participants to rate their own temperatures in each situation.

4) Divide the participants into small groups to compare their answers and discuss the following questions: a) Does everyone have the same amount of anxiety or anger in each situation? b) Does everyone have the same kind of feelings in each situation? c) Why or why not?

5) Explain the role of assertive posture.

Posture: Assertive people stand straight or sit up when spoken to or when speaking to others. This does not mean standing like a rod or pole, but does mean standing in a relaxed position or sitting with head held firm and legs crossed. Passive people often stand rigidly with arms crossed and aggressive people often have fists or teeth clenched. Assertive people stand or sit in a relaxed fashion giving their attention to the people they are speaking to.

6) Ask the participants to silently role play the following postures in small groups:

a) A passive person requesting something.

b) An assertive person requesting something.

c) An aggressive person requesting something.

d) A passive person refusing something.

e) An assertive person refusing something.

f) An aggressive person refusing something.

7) Explain the role of voice tone or affect.

Affect: An assertive person speaks using a variety of voice tones. It is possible to make an assertive statement in a voice which communicates anxiety or anger. Therefore, assertive statements must be stated with an assertive affect or voice tone. Passive people often speak in a flattened or dull or spiritless voice, while aggressive people sometimes speak through clenched jaws or in a demanding tone.

8) Ask the participants to practice the different voice tones or affect in small groups.

9) Give out homework assignment #1.

WORKSHEET # 3

The Feeling Thermometer

1. You get a note that _____ wants to see you in his/her office. _____
2. _____ asks you to be quiet in class. _____
3. Someone shoves you in the hall. _____
4. In your physical education class you get chosen captain of a team, _____
5. It's your turn to give a book report in front of class. _____
6. You're walking home by yourself and you notice a stranger following you. _____
7. A very popular girl invites you to her party. _____
8. Your parents go out of town and you have to spend the night alone. _____
9. _____ asks you to sing a solo in an assembly. _____
10. You get an "F" on your spelling test. _____
11. At the store, a clerk accuses you of trying to shoplift. _____
12. Your parents told you to be home at 10:00 P.M. and you get home one hour late. ____
13. A boy you know invites you to go somewhere with his family. _____
14. You get a "C" on your report card. _____
15. Your friends arrange a surprise birthday party for you. _____

HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT # 1

HOMEWORK: Keep track of your feeling thermometer in 3 different situations: one where it's low, one where it's in the middle, and one where it's high. Record your temperature, describe where it happened, state who you were with, and indicate what happened.

SAMPLE: TEMPERATURE:	WHERE:	WHO:	WHAT HAPPENED:
Example: 80	AT LUNCH	WITH FRIEND	SOMEONE STOLE MY LUNCH
1.			
2.			
3.			

Session #4

Goal: To review the "feeling thermometer," "assertive posture and voice tone" and to explain the procedure of "generating alternatives."

Objective: Participants will be able to generate alternative ways to react to problem situations.

Procedures:

1.) Hand out Worksheet #4 and ask students to individually complete it. After everyone has completed the worksheet, review the answers as a group.

2.) Explain to students that although there are generally three basic ways to respond to a problem situation (i.e., passive, aggressive or assertive), there are many different responses in each category.

3.) Pass out Worksheet #5 and ask students to work in small groups generating different responses. Each group then gets an opportunity to report their lists of responses to the whole group or class.

WORKSHEET # 4

AGGRESSIVE, ASSERTIVE, OR PASSIVE?

1. Ann tells her friend calmly that she is angry at her for breaking her promise. _____

2. Joe hears that Frank is talking behind his back. The next time he sees Frank in the hall, Joe hits him. _____

3. Sara is hurt over something Tom said to her, but she tries to act like she doesn't care. _____

4. Robert is corrected by the teacher and he yells back at her. _____

5. Stephanie thinks she would do a good job as class president, so she nominates herself. _____

6. Ricky does not really want to steal candy at the store, but when his friends begin, so does he. _____

7. When kids tease Molly, she goes to the restroom and cries. _____

8. John was asked to go to the movie with a friend but he didn't want to. He said, "No, thanks. I"d rather not." _____

9. Mary wants to be class vice-president, so she tells all the kids they better vote for her. _____

10. When the teacher asks Kevin for his opinion he always shrugs his shoulders and says, "I don't know." _____

List 4 things to think about when you're trying to be assertive.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

Give 2 reasons why everyone's feeling thermometer is different.

Give one example of when <u>your</u> feeling thermometer would be high.

NAME _____

WORKSHEET # 5

LIST AS MANY RESPONSES AS YOU CAN THINK OF IN EACH SITUATION.

1. Refusal: You asked the teacher two questions about fractions which you're having difficulty understanding. You have more questions to ask about fractions but when s/he calls on you s/he says "why don't you try to figure it out?" What can you do? What else can you do?

2. Request: You're ready for your teacher to check your workbook and s/he keeps helping another student. What can you do? What else can you do?

3. Refusal: A friend of yours asks to borrow your brand new skate board that you got for your birthday. You don't want to lend it. What can you do? What else can you do?

4. Refusal: The teacher wants you to stay after school and practice your spelling, addition and subtraction. You would rather not. What can you do? What else can you do?

5. Refusal: A classmate of yours wants to look at your answers to a test. You don't want to give her/him the answers. What can you do? What else can you do?

6. Request: You're in a reading group that is going too fast and you're getting behind. You want to be in a slower group. What can you do? What else can you do?

Session #5

Goal: To practice giving and receiving compliments and using self-reinforcement.

Objectives: Participants will be able to give "assertive compliments," "receive compliments" appropriately and use "self-reinforcement."

Procedure:

1) Giving Compliments: Explain to students how to identify aspects or characteristics about others and how to mention that to them. Examples could be: "Hi, I like your hat", "That's a neat jacket", "I liked your joke or comment in class", "That's a nice picture". Explain and model how to smile when giving compliments.

2) Receiving Compliments: Explain to students how to accept compliments by showing some appreciation. Examples could be: "Thanks, I liked it also", "Yes, I just love it", "Thank you, I like your hat also". Teach students that there should not be any rejection or devaluation of the compliment, and that they should try to smile when receiving compliments.

A) Give each student a chance to role-play or act-out giving a compliment to someone they know (either in the group or out).

B) Encourage each student to give a compliment to someone else before your next group meeting.

3) Self-reinforcement: Ask each student to write down three good things about themselves and three good things they could tell themselves after doing something well.

* Note: Stress the differences between self-praise, self-reinforcement, positive self-statements and bragging.

A) Self-praise or self-reinforcement should be statements said to one's self (silent talk). Examples are: "I sure did that well" or "Nice job_____."

B) Positive self-statements may be silent or verbal statements of self-praise. Examples are: "I'm pretty good at dancing or basketball", or "I'm doing well in school this year".

C) Bragging is making verbal self-statements which make other people uncomfortable or make you appear conceited or arrogant or obnoxious. It's a matter of degree. Positive self-statements once in a while are pleasant for people to hear. People who constantly use positive self-statements become boring and are uncomfortable to be around.

Session #6

Goal: To practice giving and receiving compliments and using self-reinforcement.

Objectives: (Same as Session #5) Participants will be able to give assertive compliments, receive compliments appropriately and use self-reinforcement.

Procedures:

1) Review giving and receiving compliments. Remind students to smile, make eye contact, and use a serious affect when giving compliments. Remind students to smile, make eye contact and say, "thank-you" when receiving a compliment. Emphasize the importance of not de-valuing the compliment. Example: When a student is complimented on his/her dress, s/he might say, "Oh, this is old", or, "I think it's ugly".

2) Ask students to sit in a circle (or two small circles) and take turns giving compliments to one person at a time. Each student must say a different compliment.

3) Ask students to explain how they felt when they received their compliments (i.e., good, flattered, self-confident). Remind students that self-reinforcement often has the same effect and nobody else knows you are doing it.

Session #7

Goals: To learn how to "initiate contact", "ask open questions," "disclose feelings" and "make friends."

Objectives: Participants will know how to initiate contact with new students, ask open questions and disclose feelings.

Procedures:

1) Distance: Explain that in our culture 1½ - 3 feet is a close social distance. A closer space between individuals may be perceived as aggressive, while a greater distance may be perceived as passive. Ask students to take turns walking up to (approaching) another student. The stationary student has to signal non-verbally (i.e., gestures, facial expressions and eye-contact) to the approacing student when to stop. Have students repeat in other pairs, and then discuss the experience.

Ask: a) How much space do you need?
b) Is it different with different people?
c) Is it different for boys and girls?
d) Is it different with an adult?

2) Open questions: Explain that open questions are questions which tend to elicit a great deal of information from the person addressed. Open questions usually begin with the words "what", "why," or "how". Open questions are very good ways to start conversations with strangers and often provide lots of "free information" for future questions or discussion.

3) Free information: Explain that free information is information offered in addition to that which was specifically asked for. If the "asker" listens carefully to the free information offered, s/he will have other topics to include into a conversation. Free information is not offered unless the person has a desire to speak about that topic.

4) Ask students to work in pairs and role-play meeting someone new. Remind them to a) ask open questions, b) tell things about themselves and c) focus on free information.

5) Give out and have students role-play Worksheet #5B.

WORKSHEET #5B

NEW KID AT SCHOOL

ROLE PLAY #1

Person A--

You get a new student in your health class. You want to get to know him or her. Introduce yourself and start talking. Remember to:

1. ask open questions (what, why, how)
2. tell things about yourself.

Before you start write down 3 open questions you could ask this person.

ROLE PLAY #2

Person B--

You are a new student at your school. You want to get to know the person sitting next to you in your health class. Remember to:

1. ask open questions (what, why, how)
2. tell things about yourself.

Before you start write down 3 open questions you could ask this person.

Session #8

Goal: To learn how to "disclose feelings."

Objectives: Participants will be able to disclose feeling in role-play situations.

Procedures:

1) Ask students to close their eyes, put their heads on their desks and remain silent.

2) Read softly and slowly the following:

"I want you to imagine yourself in a situation. Really try to imagine how you would feel. I'll ask you some questions, but you just answer them silently to yourself.

There's something about you that you don't want anyone to know. Maybe it's something that happened to you in the past or something you're embarrassed about. Don't worry. I'm not going to ask you to tell me this secret. If you really can't think of a "real situation", make up something. If you did have a secret you did't want anyone to know about, what would it be?

OK, you finally decided that you're going to tell your best friend about it because you really want to talk with someone about this secret. You're just about to tell your friend but something stops you. Why can't you tell your friend? Are you afraid what your friend will think of you?

OK, you finally get up your courage and blurt out your secret to your friend. What is your friend's reaction? What's the look on his/her face? What does s/he think of you? Does s/he still like you? How do you feel now? Worried? Embarrassed? Relieved? (Pause) Now you can slowly put your heads up and open your eyes."

3) Ask students why they think people sometimes hide their real feelings.

4) Give out Worksheet #6 and ask students to complete it. Have the participants show their papers to one other person. The other person must sign indicating they have read the "self-disclosure."

5) Ask (and reinforce with praise) for volunteers to share how they felt telling their feelings to someone else (students may feel uncomfortable sharing their actual answer with the entire group).

WORKSHEET #6

FINISH THESE SENTENCES

1. Right now I feel

2. I hope I never

3. I feel sad when

4. I get angry when

5. I feel happy when

6. More than anything I wish that

7. I am afraid that

8. I look forward to

9. If I could change one thing about myself I would

10. One thing I like about myself is

11. One problem I have is

12. Right now I feel

Session #9

Goals: To learn how to "recognize signs of anger" and "generate alternative reactions."

Objectives: Participants will be able to label physical signs of anger and express ways of releasing anger or calming down.

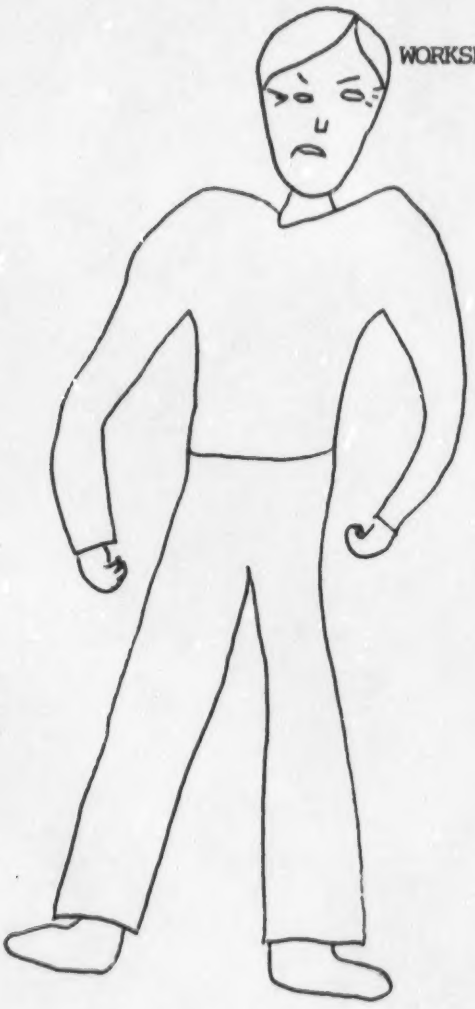
Procedures:

1) Give out Worksheet#7 and go over it with the participants. First describe and label some physical signs of anger. Then ask students to role-play the posture and physical characteristics of an angry person.

2) Assign students to groups and ask them to complete Worksheet #8 themselves. Students should not only write down what they can do, but also what is likely to happen if they choose that action. Stress that every action they choose is likely to have different consequences.

WORKSHEET # 7 (STUDENT COPY)

AN ANGRY PERSON



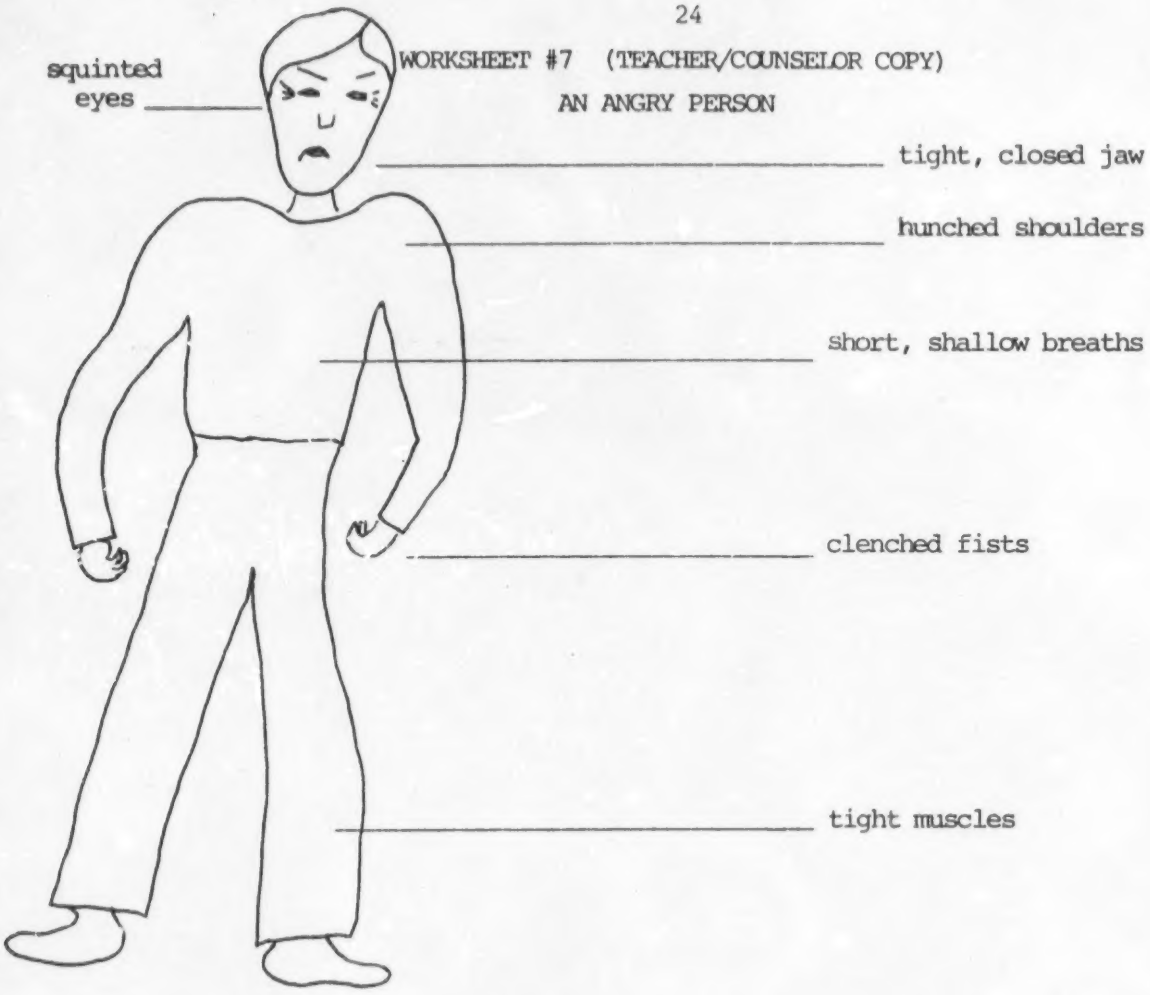
1. What physical things could you do to calm down when you're angry?

2. When you feel yourself getting mad what can you do to "play it cool?"

3. What can you do to release your anger in a way that doesn't hurt anyone?

WORKSHEET #7 (TEACHER/COUNSELOR COPY)

AN ANGRY PERSON



1. What physical things could you do to calm down when you're angry?
   - breathe deeply
   - unclench fists
   - un-tighten face, stretch
   - open mouth
   - open eyes wide
   - loosen up

2. When you feel yourself getting mad what can you do to "play it cool?"
   - take time out
   - walk away
   - count to 10
   - walk around block

3. What can you do to release your anger in a way that doesn't hurt anyone?
   - yell where no one can hear you
   - beat on a punching bag or pillow
   - jog or play basketball
   - rip up some paper
   - write down your feelings
   - talk to a counselor or friend
   - tell the person you're really angry at

WORKSHEET # 8

What can you do when you get angry?

You have been working hard on a test. Suddenly your teacher accuses you of cheating. You were not cheating and you get angry at your teacher for accusing you.

What can you do? What is likely to happen?

You're walking down the hall and someone runs into you knocking you down. You get angry.

What can you do? What is likely to happen?

Your mother is missing some money from her wallet. She blames you because you have taken money from her in the past. This time you did not take it and you are angry at her for accusing you.

What can you do? What is likely to happen?

Session #10

Goal: To learn some "self-relaxation procedures," "assertive touching" and "latent listening".

Objective: Participants will be able to describe and model several self-relaxation procedures and the techniques of "assertive touching" and "latent listening."

Procedures:

1) Review some procedures for reducing anger.

2) Review some role-plays for reducing anger.

3) Explain and practice tensing and relaxing body parts for 3 seconds (a) hands, (b) neck muscles (c) shoulders (d) stomach (e) face.

4) Assertive touching: Explain that assertive touching is lightly patting a friend on the shoulder saying "hi" or "how are you". Hitting someone harder would be viewed as aggressive and never touching is viewed as passive behavior. Ask students to role-play and practice some examples of assertive touching.

5) Latent listening: Explain that latent listening is a "long listening" which allows the other person to finish his or her statements. If the conversation is wasting time, it would be appropriate to interrupt and perhaps change the subject. However, if the conversation is pleasant, then students should be taught to allow others to finish and then even wait one or two seconds before responding. Interruptions and/or immediate responses are often perceived as aggressive and long delays are often viewed as passive. If students need more time to respond, they may use "fillers" such as "let me think about that for a minute (or awhile)", or "let me check and I'll tell you".

* Note: Remind participants that people do not tend to like individuals who interrupt conversations often and do not allow others to finish their statements. We tend to think of those people as rude or aggressive. On the other hand we do not have to go on being bored for a long time before we politely interrupt someone. In such a situation it would be appropriate or assertive to interrupt and perhaps try to close the conversation or change the subject. This is a difficult social skill to learn and you should practice this with the group.

Session #11

Goal: To learn how to "accept negative criticism."

Objectives: Participants will be able to describe and model how to receive negative criticism.

Procedures:

Negative criticism:

1) Ask students to verbalize (explain) the experience of receiving negative criticism from a) a friend (peer) b) a parent c) a teacher.

2) Explain the experience of receiving a negative criticism from someone and following it with a positive self-statement. Examples:

"I'm still OK, I can change"

"I'm OK, I'll learn it soon"

"It's OK, I'll do better tomorrow"

"OK, I made a mistake, everyone does sometime"

3) Explain the procedures of accepting a negative criticism and responding.

a) listen to it quietly
b) consider it (don't respond angrily immediately)
c) think
d) respond

If you believe the criticism is correct or partly correct try one of these:

a) "Yes, you're right, I never realized that before"
b) "Yes, you're correct, I'm, sorry"
c) "It's hard for me to admit this, but you're right"
d) "You may be right about this, I'll have to pay more attention"
3) "May I explain why I did it?

If you believe the person is making a mistake:

a) "I know you think I did that, but I'd like to explain my side"
b) "I know you think I'm like that but I'm not"
c) "May I explain my side?"
d) "May I explain what I did?"
e) "May I explain why I did that?"

* Note: Stress the importance of acknowledging the criticism first. Acknowledging is different from admitting guilt. All you are doing is acknowledging that you heard and understood the criticism. Adults often get very mad when children or adolescents do not acknowledge the criticism.

Session #12

Goal: To review past sessions.

Objective: Participants will be able to describe and model the procedures of "eye-contact", "voice volume", "voice tone", "posture", "touch", "latent listening", "facial expression", "distance", "compliments", "receiving compliments" and "negative criticism", etc.

Procedures:

1) Review all the procedures from past sessions.

2) Assign role-plays from situations in Appendix "A" and have students practice the assertive procedures.

*Note: You may wish to give a review test at this point. Or you may review the information by splitting the groups into two teams and making a game of testing the information. The teams could earn points for giving the correct answers and you could help the participants retain what they have learned through weekly team matches or games.

Appendix A

ASSERTION TRAINING ACTIVITIES *

1) Request: You're late for school, and your mom or dad won't help you find your socks even though you have asked for help. What can you do? What else can you do?

2) Refusal: You're in a grocery store and a friend asks you to steal some gum for him/her. What can you do? What else can you do?

3) Refusal: You're on your way home from school and a friend wants you to come by his/her house and see his/her new model bike or to listen to records. You're supposed to go straight home. It's now 3:30 and you are supposed to be home in 5 minutes. It takes that long from where you are now. What can you do? What else can you do?

4) Refusal: A friend asks you for 10¢ to buy a package of corn-nuts. He/she did the same last week and didn't repay you. You don't want to loan the money. What can you do? What else can you do?

5) Refusal: A boy/girl tries to crowd in front of you in the cafeteria line. You don't want to let s/he crowd. What can you do? What else can you do?

6) Refusal: Your brother/sister wants to watch the TV and you already are watching a program and would like to finish watching it. He/she starts to change the channel. What can you do? What else can you do?

7) Refusal: You're baby sitting your brother/sister. Your parents instruct you that you're not supposed to have a friend over. A friend wants to watch TV. What can you do? What else can you do?

8) Refusal: You're at the grocery store getting some bread for your mother or father. They don't have the kind your parent wanted, but the clerk gives you something like it. You don't want this kind of bread. What can you do? What else can you do?

9) Refusal: A friend of yours is planning to play a trick on another classmate. He/she is going to (trip them, make fun of how they talk, walk, etc.) at recess. You don't want to be a part of this. What can you do? What else can you do?

10) Refusal: The teacher wants you to raise your hand during the flag salute and you don't want to. What can you do? What else can you do?

11) Refusal: The teacher accuses you of hitting a fellow student and you don't want to take the blame. What can you do? What else can you do?

12) Refusal: You have a substitute teacher today. A friend of yours wants you to play around and sit in a seat that isn't yours. You don't want to. What can you do? What else can you do?

13) Refusal: You're at recess and a number of friends want you to play ball, but you don't want to. What can you do? What else can you do?

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* These activities were adopted and edited from Rotheram (1977)

14) Refusal: You've taken some returnable bottles back to the liquor store and the clerk says they don't take them. You have returned bottles there before and don't want to pull your wagon all the way home again. What can you do? What else can you do?

15) Refusal: You are walking home from school and someone in a car drives up and asks you for directions. You give them to him/her and they ask you if you'll ride along with them because they don't know the area. What can you do? What else can you do?

16) Request: You see a child on the playground who falls and scrapes his/her leg. What can you do? What else can you do?

17) Request: The classroom is noisy and you cannot study your lesson. What can you do? What else can you do?

18) Request: You see two classmates arguing about a spot in the lunch line. They look like they might start to fight. What can you do? What else can you do?

19) Request: You are standing with a group of your classmates. One child removes a chair of another child. That child is about to sit down but the chair won't be there. What can you do? What else can you do?

20) Request: You took a permission slip home to your parents so you can participate in a special program at school. Your parents have not signed it. What can you do? What else can you do?

21) Request: You missed school yesterday because you were sick. There was a homework assignment due then and you want to turn it in now. What can you do? What else can you do?

22) Request: You came back to school after being sick but you have forgotten your absence slip. Your father works at night and you don't want the office to call him during the day because he'll get angry. What can you do? What else can you do?

23) Request: You're really interested in a subject you are studying in history and would like to learn more about it by doing extra-credit assignment. What can you do? What else can you do?

24) Request: You're doing a group project and not all the group members are doing their part on it. You are carrying the load. What do you do about it? What else can you do?

25) Request: You're in a reading group that is going too slow and you want to be in a faster one. What can you do? What else can you do?

26) Request: You're in a reading group which is going too fast and you're getting behind. You want to be in a slower group. What can you do? What else can you do?

27) Request: You're having trouble in math and would like your parents to help you with your multiplication tables. What can you do? What else can you do?

28) Request: You're having trouble with your math and would like your teacher to help you. You ask if s/he would stay after to help but s/he says they have to go to a meeting. What can you do? What else can you do?

29) Request: You have gone to the store for your mom. You start to leave when you notice that you gave the clerk a $5.00 bill and s/he gave you change for $1.00. What can you do? What else can you do? (S/he gave you change for a $10.00 when you gave a $5.00 bill).

30) Request: You're ready for your teacher to check your workbook and s/he keeps helping another student. What can you do? What else can you do?

31) Request: It's time for school, and you want to get into the administration building, but the door is locked. What can you do? What else can you do?

32) Request: You're playing ball at lunch recess, the game's almost over, the score's tied, you want to finish the game, but the playground teacher calls you over to collect the playground equipment. What can you do? What else can you do?

33) Refusal: A friend of yours asks to borrow your brand new skate board that you got for your birthday. You don't want to lend it. What can you do? What else can you do?

34) Refusal: You've gone to the library to get a specific book on prehistoric animals, which you know is good. The librarian wants to give you one you don't want. What can you do? What else can you do?

35) Refusal: Your parents want you to play in the band/sing in the choir and you don't like doing this. What can you do? What else can you do?

36) Refusal: The teacher wants you to stay after achool and practice your spelling, addition and subtraction. You would rather not. What can you do? What else can you do?

37) Refusal: A classmate of yours wants to look at your answers to a test. You don't want to give her/him the answers. What can you do? What else can you do?

38) Refusal: You asked the teacher two questions about fractions which you're having difficulty understanding. You have more questions to ask about them but when s/he calls on you s/he says "why don't you try to figure it out?" What can you do? What else can you do?

39) Refusal: The teacher wants you to put your head on your desk but it hurts when you do. What can you do? What else can you do?

40) Refusal: You're at recess and teams are being chosen for a ballgame. You arrive when they're just finishing choosing teams which are now even. One of the team captains says you can't play because you'd make the teams uneven. You want to play very badly. What can you do? What else can you do?

SAMPLE PARENT PERMISSION FORM
(If Necessary)

Date_____

Dear _____:
(parent's/guardian's name)

As a part of your child's regular classroom curriculum in _____ class, Smith's School will be including some activities designed to teach students more appropriate behavior. These activities may include instruction and role-playing of situations at school such as: "A student tries to push in line in front of you. What can you do?" or "A student wants you to help play a trick on another student. What can you do?"

The activities will be presented in your child's regular classroom by Smith's counselor, _____with consultation from Smith's consulting psychologist, _____, over a period of approximately one month.

Please complete the bottom section of this letter and return it to me.

Thank you,

_____
(Teacher's signature)

I give my permission for _____to take part in these
(student's name)

activities. _____
(parent's/guardian's signature)

I do NOT give my permission for _____ to take part
(student's name)

in these activities and would prefer that my child spend this time at the school

library. _____
(parent's/guardian's signature)